

HERO
AND
LEANDER:
A
POEM

BY
MUSAEUS,

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK BY

L. EUSDEN,

OF TRINITY-COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

GLASGOW:

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H E R O

A N D

Pam 58

L E A N D E R,

SING, Muse, the conscious torch, whose nightly
[flame,
(The shining signal of a brighter dame,
Thro' trackless waves the bold Leander led,
To taste the dang'rous joys of Hero's bed:
Sing the stol'n bliss in gloomy shades conceal'd,
And never to the blushing morn reveal'd.
I see the lovely youth triumphant ride
O'er the proud billows of th' insulted tide;
And lo! a light shoots glimm'ring from afar,
Of nuptial sweets the kind-prefaging star:
A light! which (would propitious Jove encline)
In brighter glory should for ever shine;
And mix'd among its kindred fires above,
Be call'd the gentle harbinger of love.

For sure it did on earth this office bear,
And Hymen's pleasures were its nightly care;
Till envious winds with boist'rous fury rose:
But goddess! thou the mournful tale disclose;
At once from high the sacred torch was tost,
Its flame extinguish'd, and the lover lost.
Where Neptune stretcheth out an arm, to bound
Fair Europe's confines from the Asian ground,
A rising town on either shore commands
The distant sea, and awes the neighb'ring lands;
Here the Idalian boy his sport begun,
And with one dart a double conquest won:
To equal breasts an equal flame convey'd,
The lovely'st youth ador'd the lovely'st maid.
He sure must never have convers'd with fame,
Who knows not Hero and Leander's name:
Alike both glories of their native place;
Abydos one, and one did Sestos grace.

Who-e'er thou art, that hither bend'st thy way,
Oh! for a while the pleasing coast survey!
This, this the tow'r, whence the kind light did guide
The swimming lover to his Sestian bride:
That the fam'd Hellespont, he nightly crost,
Which still in murmurs groans Leander lost.
But haste we love's soft triumphs to relate,
From the first dawns to its ripen'd state:
And whence the youth so passionate became,
And how the nymph glow'd with as fierce a flame.
Hero from noble blood her line did trace,
Her looks confess'd the glories of her race:
Priestess of Venus too, but chose to reign
In noiseless ease, and shunn'd the nuptial chain.
Far from her parents early she retir'd,
And the safe covert of a tow'r desir'd:
The tow'r was high, and near the water stood;
She seem'd a new-sprung Venus from the flood.

Discreet withal, nor lov'd to dance, and play,
And waste in vain impertinence the day:
Secure in innocence, the liv'd unknown,
And balk'd the witty censures of the town.
There is an inborn Pride, which taints the race;
A fair one ne'er could brook a fairer face.
To pleasure Venus was her darling care,
Nor did thy altars, Cupid, want a share:
In vain, alas! the pious virgin strove;
No vows the fiery arrows could remove,
But she must fall a sacrifice to love.
For now the time was come, the solemn day,
When annual rites religious Sestians pay
To beauty's queen; around with fables spread,
She mourns Adonis, fair Adonis dead!
Hither in shoals from neighb'ring islands throng,
Confus'd, the gay, the grave, the old, the young:

LEANDER.

From Phrygia these, and from Haemonia some,
But all from Cyprus, and Abydos come,
And not one ling'ring fluggard droop'd at home.
No am'rous youth would surely miss the day,
Where feasts invite, they still with joy obey:
Scarce (as I guess) on bare devotion's score,
The silent statues of the gods t' adore;
For beasts, like theirs, with youthful raptures warm,
Not the dead idols, but the living charm.
But oh! to see with what a sprightly haste
The beauteous Priestess thro' the temple past!
Not rising Phoebe shows a face so bright
To glad the world, and rule the spangl'd night.
For on each blooming cheek, by nature spread,
Was seen the purest white, and freshest red:
Such is the hue, the springing lilly shows,
Fleck'd with the blushes of the op'ning rose.

Scarce yet the parallel would be compleat,
Not that so beautiful, nor this so sweet.
Of old the thinking dotards did agree
To stint the graces to the number three;
Had Hero blest those times, they soon had found
Too dull their notion, and too strait their bound:
When e'er she smil'd, had view'd with dumb surprize,
Ten thousand graces sporting in her eyes.
The bright immortal must with pleasure hear
A priestess, far above all mortals fair :
In beauty's charms (could beauty's cause be try'd)
If not a rival, surely near ally'd.
No wonder then each youth a flame confess,
And with heav'd hands the sweet enchantress blest:
None but inspir'd with tender thoughts, began
To wish himself (in vain!) the happy man.
Desiring eyes on the lov'd object hung,
Where-e'er she glided thro' the wond'ring throng,

And scatter'd pleasing ruin all along.
 'Till from the crowd
 By love one eloquent above the rest,
 In these, or words like these, his soul exprest.
 Big with vain hope to Sparta once I came,
 Where ev'ry nymph can ev'ry breast inflame:
 But never yet have in one virgin seen,
 With so much majesty, so sweet a mien.
 Who knows, but Venus may some cheat design,
 And what we fancy human, is divine:
 The Graces much are fam'd, and this must be
 Sure the most charming of the charming three.
 Weary'd with looking, fain I would be gone,
 Yet could (methinks) for ever still look on.
 Were death the price, doom'd for the happy night,
 Not death should damp one moment of delight:
 Nor could th' immortal joys of God above
 Engage my wishes, or distract my love.

But thou, O goddess! listen to my pray'r;

If not thy Hero, give me such a fair.

Thus mourn'd some wounded youth, whilst others
In wild disorder to conceal their love: [strove

But flames too fierce to hide at once possess'd,

And roul'd, and revell'd in Leander's breast.

He saw the nymph, and struck with strange delight,
Resolv'd on something far beyond a sight.

He bled, but would not keep his wound unknown,
And wish'd to live, but could not live alone.

Ungovern'd thoughts to rage improv'd desire,
And kindl'd in his eyes impetuous fire.

Beware, ye heedless youths, and fly apace;

No dart so piercing, as a beauteous face:

Nor winged deaths with half such swiftness fly,

As the loose glances from a sparkling eye.

The luscious poison our fond eyes convey

Down to th'unguarded heart, a trembling, helpless prey.

Unruly passions now the youth assail,
 And fears and hopes successively prevail:
 Sooth'd with her charms, he strives his fears to blame,
 Then blushing, checks the too ambitious flame:
 But wiser love with noble pride disdains
 The bashful modesty of simple swains;
 And in soft whispers said, his laws were such,
 None fears too little, and none hopes too much.
 Rais'd with these thoughts, he did his steps advance,
 To try the magic of a side-long glance;
 With all the artful blandishments, that move
 The soul, to listen to the Lure of love.
 She took the hint; (what lovers now can find
 That nat'ral tendency in woman-kind?)
 First seem'd to frown, but easily grew mild,
 And, conscious of her own perfections, smil'd.
 Then turns her head with graceful scorn away,
 But quick returning, doth her self betray;

And in love's greatest eloquence replies,
The silent language of consenting eyes.
With joy amaz'd, the youth his passion knew
At once discover'd, and successful too;
Impatient grown, he chid the tedious light,
And wish'd the swift approaches of the night:
Nor wish'd in vain; soon the bright Hesper shone,
And love-obliging shades came rushing on.
Darkness can fears expel, and hopes renew,
Th' embolden'd lover to his quarry flew,
And there stood face to face, a glorious interview.
Then all on fire her hand he gently press'd,
And sighs and dying murmurs told the rest.
Starting she did a short resentment feign,
And with a frown drew back her head again.
But he, with love inspir'd, new joys descries
Thro' the thin umbrage of a forc'd disguise;

And seiz'd her robe, and full of pleasing thought
The last recesses of the temple fought.
With steps unequal she advanc'd behind,
And with a willing, half unwilling mind,
Threaten'd the youth; at once severe and kind.
Stranger, what madness doth thy breast invade?
Whither, ah! whither would you force a maid?
Let loose my garments quick, and home retire;
Flee the displeasure of my wealthy fire:
If that you flight, and mortal pow'r disown,
Vex not the priestess, lest the goddess frown.
Go, be not with presumptuous thoughts mis-led;
'Tis bold aspiring to a virgin's bed.
True to her sex, thus chid the charming fair,
But glad Leander could such chidings bear:
This seeming storm a future calm betrays;
Th' auspicious omen of his Halcyon days.

For women soon are kind, if peevish grown;
Faintly they struggle, when their rage is gone.
That known, the youth her fragrant bosom press'd,
And warm'd with melting lips each swelling breast.
Then thus begun;—oh! how shall I proclaim
Thy ev'ry charm? shall I thy wond'rous frame
A second Venus, or Minerva name?
For sure those looks no earthly stamp display;
None ever boasted so refin'd a clay:
Bless'd be thy fire, and bless'd be doubly more
The fertile womb, which the fair burden bore.
With pity hear a youth his flame reveal;
Whom you could only wound, 'tis you can only heal.
If Venus be your guide, let Venus move;
And by her great example learn to love.
Ah! come, this silly name of maid despise;
Indulge thy soul, and give a loose to joys.

No virgin can a worthy priestess be
To her, who laughs at dull virginity.

Wou'dst thou the goddess faithfully adore?

Regard nice conduct less, and nature more.

Oh! can'st thou ever her sweet laws admire,

Yet be a stranger to a lover's fire?

The little, wanton God did me ordain,

If not to conquer, still to hug thy chain.

A slave so humble was Alcides seen,

When led by Hermes to the Lydian queen:

My passion still a nobler spring did move;

The God of wit yields to the God of love.

al. Why need I Atalanta's fate declare,

Who wisely (as she thought) declin'd the snare?

While from Melanion's arms all ice she fled,

And shunn'd the pleasures of a nuptial bed:

Till she by Venus rage her follies mourn'd,

And love for love, and flame for flame return'd.

Let this Arcadian nymph instruct thy mind ;
Thou art more beauteous, wou'dst thou be more kind
Accents so soft her passions did controul,
And sooth'd the angry fair, and tun'd her soul.
She fix'd her eyes upon the silent ground,
And all with crimson blushes glow'd around.
Unwonted motions own'd some new desire,
And oft she gather'd up her loose attire.
A yielding maid by ev'ry sign was meant ;
For dumb denying is a sure consent.
Pleasingly pain'd, she first begins to fear
Something, she knows not what, she knows not where
Deep in her breast Leander's charms remain ;
She thinks, and sighs, then looks, and sighs again.
Nor the fond lover, with a less surprize,
Fed on her snowy neck his famish'd eyes.
Thus long a virgin-modesty she try'd,
Not to discover, what she could not hide :

By slow degrees from earth she rais'd her look,
 Distilling humid blushes e'er she spoke,
 Then in harmonious sounds the painful silence broke.
 Stranger, thy words might rocks to pity move;
 Where didst thou learn the wond'rous art of love?
 Ah! by whose conduct didst thou hither come?
 Who first seduc'd thee from thy native home?
 Pleasing thy tale, but pleasing still in vain;
 No faithless rover must his wish obtain:
 Or if I should so mad and senseless prove,
 My pow'rful parents would upbraid my love.
 What, tho' some secret pleasures you design'd?
 To silence long they could not be confin'd:
 The tongues of men so scandalous are grown;
 You hear from thousands, what you act with one.
 Whoe'er thou art, thy name and country tell,
 For mine (alas!) by thee are known too well.

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 Whoe'er thou art, thy name and country tell,
 For mine (alas !) by thee are known too well.

That tow'r, which mates the skies, is my retreat ;
'Tis there I fix my solitary seat :
The mistress of one damsel, I despise
What all th' unthinking many chiefly prize,
Greatness, and pomp, and shew, and public noise.
This, this th' Elysium, which I early chose ;
In vain my father did my choice oppose:
From giddy crowds, and youthful gambols free,
Calm I enjoy a golden liberty :
And safe on shore, with pleasure hear from far
The grumbling murmurs of the watry war.
Here paus'd the sweet-tongu'd Syren ; and afraid,
Began to wonder, where her thoughts had stray'd.
Her looks the trouble of her mind disclose,
While with new blushes new-born glories rose ;
Which still she strove to hide : but he employs
His thoughts on means to meet his coming joys.

The God of love, who strikes the fatal blow,
 Can best (if any can) the med'cine show:
 He to the youth the secret did reveal,
 Pleas'd as he was to wound, and then to heal.
 The lover soon a zealous fury show'd
 T' obey the wise instructions of the leading God:
 On her soft bosom he reclin'd his head,
 And sighing, thus the fond Leander said.
 For thee, my fair one, dangers I'll despise,
 And dare th' inclemencies of winter skies:
 Swift on the wings of love, I'll force my way,
 Tho' winds, and flames, and floods command my stay.
 These arms the foaming surges shall withstand,
 Insult their rage, and oar me safe to land.
 Thus ev'ry night to thy embrace I'll fly,
 Shiv'ring with cold, all pale and breathless lye,
 And when full warm'd, with bliss dissolve, and die.

Justly you ask the country, whence I came;
Know then, Abydos is my neighb'ring home.
Ah! from thy turret let some friendly light
Chase the thick darkness, and direct my sight:
Thou the delicious land of love shalt be,
And I the ship, steer'd by that star to thee.
All other lights above I shall disdain,
Whether they kindly, or unkindly reign:
Nor see Orion blazing from afar,
The slow Bootes, and the northern carr.
But oh! beware, too charming maid, beware!
(If e'er my safety can deserve thy care)
With caution let the shining guide be plac'd,
For when its flame expires, I breathe my last.
What more?—Leander is the name I bear,
And only to be thy Leander swear.
Thus did the youthful pair resolve to know
From mutual love what mighty pleasures flow:

Secret they fix'd the place, the time to meet ;
(For sweetest joys, if stoll'n, are doubly sweet)
When ebbing darkness seem'd to bid adieu,
And both unwilling by constraint withdrew.
She to her tow'r fled swifter than the wind,
The careful lover wisely stay'd behind ;
And mark'd the place, where all his treasure lay,
Then nimbly leap'd from shore, and cut the liquid way.
The force of love by absence lovers try ;
On tardy wings the drowsie minutes fly :
The day looks dull, with all its beauties bright,
'Tis morn, 'tis noon, but still they wish for night.
At last the shades did with such silence creep,
That universal nature seem'd to sleep.
But the unpitying tyrant, Love, denies
Refreshing slumbers to Leander's eyes :
Restless he roves along the dreary shore,
While with tumultuous rage the surges roar.

But watchful Hero rais'd the torch on high,
The kind fore-runner of approaching joy :
He saw the promis'd star, how bright it shone !
And by its flame learn'd to improve his own.
But when the billows louder roar'd, he stood,
And, trembling, view'd the melancholy flood :
Then with these words his drooping spirits cheers,
Resumes his courage, and expels his fears.
Love, like the sea, a boundless fury claims ;
There rowling waters, here are rowling flames ;
What means my throbbing breast ? securely move
Thro' coldest waters, when all-fir'd with love.
Venus is kind ; fond heart thy self compose :
From the green ocean first the goddess rose.
Her still the tumults of our souls obey,
And with a nod she smooths the ruffl'd sea.
This said ; the youth with eager haste undrest,
And circl'd round his head his flowing vest :

Then thro' the floods pursu'd his hot desires,
 (For floods could never quench a lover's fires.)
 Still as he swam, he kept the light in view,
 And was himself the ship, and pilot too.
 Mean time, the nymph no easie labour finds
 To screen the torch from rude tempestuous winds:
 In ev'ry noise Leander's voice she hears,
 And all his dangers doubles by her fears.
 Till, much fatigu'd, he landed on the shore,
 And with a lover's fury fought the tow'r.
 The fair one met him with extended arms,
 And to his pleasure yielded all her charms:
 In silent joy she hastens to her room,
 And scents his body o'er with rich perfume.
 The youth his nat'ral sweetness thus regain'd,
 But panted still for what he had sustain'd.
 Then both laid gently down; the loving bride
 Clung to the bridegroom, and thus softly cry'd:

Canst thou, my dear, all this endure for me?
What faithful lover ever lov'd like thee?
For me thy limbs in briny waves to steep,
And bear th' unwholsome stench of the deep!
Oh! 'tis too much——come to thy Hero's breast,
Forget thy labours, and securely rest.

The lover heard the soft-inviting maid,
And swift like light'ning, what he heard, obey'd:
Both blest'd alike, exalted raptures feel,
What few can fancy, and what none can tell.

This am'rous pair scorn'd vulgarly to wait
For a dull, formal, ceremonious state.
The father no Epithalamium sung,
No mask was seen, no sprightly lyre was strung.
No tuneful bard some sacred numbers said,
Nor nuptial torch adorn'd the nuptial bed.
Silence and darkness, kindred gods, were there;
One pleas'd the youth, and one oblig'd the fair:

That all around his downy wings display'd,
This shelter'd rising blushes with a shade.

Thus in luxuriant joys they pass'd the night,
Joys! which Aurora never blab'd by light.
He with a timely care did home retire,
Unsated still, and breathing still desire:
While she her change did from her parents hide,
And was by day a maid, by night a bride.
And oh! how oft their wishes join'd in one,
To hail the setting, not the rising sun.

See here the sweets of love, but quickly past;
Such pleasures are too exquisite to last.

The gawdy scene of summer-glories gone,
Winter with four and furrow'd looks stalks on.

The full-fledg'd whirlwinds their hoarse voices try,
And drive the clouds, and bluster thro' the sky.

The mounting waves, that peaceful crept before,
Boil into rage, and tumble to the shore.

The trembling mariner dares not withstand
The angry frith, and wisely keeps the land.
But winds and troubl'd seas can ne'er dismay
Leander's soul, or interrupt his way;
The fatal light once seen, the lover must obey.
Yet sure the fair, now winter's rage was strong,
A while should miss thee, to enjoy thee long:
Did reason guide, not folly warp her mind;
To prove less cruel, she must prove less kind.
But heat of passion hurry'd both too far,
And stubborn Fate's decrees resistless are:
Unhappy Hero brandish'd from above
The torch of furies now, no more the torch of love.
'Twas a bleak night; the winds began to play,
And with eternal lungs dispute their sway:
When the too constant, punctual youth again,
Flush'd with past triumphs, tempts the faithless main.

Waves rowl on waves; aloft the waters rise,
 Swell'd by the tempest, and insult the skies.
 Fierce Boreas issues with collected might,
 And sullen Auster loud provokes to fight.
 The milder Zephyr, with inferior force,
 Meets the mad Eurus in his headstrong course:
 At once they rush, at once the ocean roars,
 And curling billows dash the rocky shores.
 Much did Leander toil, and much sustain;
 Long strove to brave their rage, but strove in vain:
 Oft Neptune's aid with pious vows implor'd,
 And oft the sea-born goddess he ador'd.
 Thee, Boreas, too he minded of thy flame,
 And what thou suffer'dst for th' Athenian dame:
 But thee to pity nothing can incline,
 Deaf to his pray'rs, as she was once to thine.
 Fruitless are all essays; for love's decree,
 That rules us here, is rul'd by destiny.

Toft and retoft, no friendly succour near,
His courage faints, and finks into defpair.
His slacken'd nerves their wonted ftrength refuse,
His feet their motion, arms their vigour lofe,
Nor can he now repair his ftiff'd breath,
But drinks the briny waves, and fucks in death:
At once the torch down by the winds was toft,
And with its flame, his life and love were loft.

While the poor nymph his abfence did bemoan,
With many a penfive thought, and many a groan:
The ling'ring hours at length the day reftore;
But night could never feem too long before.
The barren beach and feas ſhe round ſurvey'd,
And hop'd her lover in the dark had ſtray'd:
But ah! too ſoon ſhe ſpy'd him, where he lay
A lump of beautiful, tho' breathlefs clay.
All o'er confus'd ſhe ſtood, and would lament,
But wanted words to give ſuch ſorrows vent.

She stamp'd, she row'd her eyes, she tore her hair,

And rav'd with all the symptoms of despair.

Then darting headlong with a furious leap,

From the high tow'r she plung'd into the deep,

Thus for Leander dy'd his fair below'd,

And equal fates their equal passion prov'd,

THE
LADY'S LOOKING-GLASS,
IN
IMITATION
OF A
GREEK IDYLLIUM.

CELIA and I the other day
Walk'd o'er the sand-hills to the sea:
The setting sun adorn'd the coast,
His beams entire, his fierceness lost;
And on the surface of the deep,
The winds lay only not asleep:
The prospect and the nymph were gay,
With silent joy I heard her say,
That we shou'd walk there ev'ry day.
But oh! the change! the winds grew high,
Impending tempests charge the sky;

The light'ning flies, the thunder roars,
And big waves lash the fright'ned shoars.
Struck with the horror of the sight,
She turns her head and wings her flight,
And trembling, vows she ne'er again
Will press the shore or see the main.

Look back at least once more, said I,
Thy self in that great glass descry;
When thou art in good humour drest,
When gentle reason rules thy breast,
The sun upon the calmest sea
Appears not half so bright as thee;
Tis then that with delight I rove
Upon the boundless depth of love;
Bless my chain, I hand my oar,
Nor think on all I left on shore.
But when vain doubts and groundless fear,
Do that dear foolish bosom tear,

When the big lip and wat'ry eye
Tell me the rising storm is nigh;
'Tis then thou art yon angry main,
Deform'd by winds, and dash'd by rain;
And the poor sailor that must try
Its fury, labours less than I.
Shipwreck'd, in vain to land I make,
While love and fate still drive me back;
Forc'd to doat on thee thy own way,
I chide thee first and then obey.
Wretched when from thee, vex'd when nigh,
I with thee or without thee die.

